

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

Honeybrook Presbyterian Church,

OF

WAYNESBURG, CHESTER COUNTY, PA.

DELIVERED BY THE PASTOR,

REV. W. W. TOTHEROH,

July 2d, 1876.

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HISTORICAL SKETCH.

JOB 32: 7.—“DAYS SHOULD SPEAK, AND MULTITUDE OF YEARS SHOULD TEACH WISDOM.”

IT is the natural tendency of mankind to be almost entirely absorbed by the future. To the man of experience, as well as to the child of inexperience; to the most prosaic, as well as to the most poetic, is the future a kind of fairy-land, a domain in which everything shall be higher, better, and more beautiful. And yet, with all this wonderful attractiveness and popularity of futurity, it must be acknowledged that all it presents is but a dream,—vague, uncertain, and that, if real information is desired, there must be a review of the days that are gone. The real worth of any thought, effort, or thing, is chiefly to be learned by a careful survey of its productions in the past.

There may be happiness derived from permitting our thoughts to ramble out into the to-morrow, which is, by our fancy, here and there dotted with peculiar attractions, but real knowledge, genuine wisdom, are only to be acquired by our visiting the paths of yesterday. The past is just a vast mine of truth. Hence it may be that one of the most advanced thinkers remarked, “not to know history is to be always a child,” and that another said, “He is the wise man who lived yesterday.”

It is then a matter of no trifling importance that we frequently recur to the past, and learn the many salutary lessons which its remembered events may teach us. “Days should speak, and multitude of years,” as we earnestly attend to their counsels, “should teach wisdom.”

It is a fact of great significance that God in the moral and spiritual education of the Israelites made constant use of their own history. The principal events which marked the pathway of their nation they were commanded to keep in remembrance and to communicate to their children, who in turn were to tell them to *their* children to the last generation. “Ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest in the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up,

and thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates, that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon earth." "Thou *shalt* remember all the ways which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness."

Nor is it less significant that the Apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost to record, for the benefit of future ages, the wondrous manner in which they were led while complying with their commission to go forth "in Christ's stead."

It is by such reflections as these that we justify, if indeed there is any need of justifying, the practice of pausing at different stated periods to note the events of past history.

On the present occasion, in accordance with the recommendation of our General Assembly, heartily endorsed by our Presbytery, we purpose to review the history of our local church. Not that that history contains anything of a very remarkable character: our location and, comparatively speaking, the but recent organization of the church prevent us from looking for anything of that kind. Our history is made up for the greater part of simply such incidents, trials, and successes as commonly mark the life of churches. Some part of what is best, and of course also some part of what is worst, cannot be written nor spoken for various reasons. Just as we may never become acquainted with the best nor the worst in the life of any individual man, so is it in reference to the life of a church.

In endeavoring to gather together the materials from which to work out the history of our church, strange as it may seem when we remember that the occasion of the organization is within the recollection of many yet living, I have experienced considerable difficulty. For years the records of the Session and of the Board of Trustees were but very incomplete notes, and at no time has any one seemed to care about treasuring up the successive events which constitute the history.

This section of country was early settled by the Welsh and Scotch-Irish; the mountains extending along upon our North and West, were apparently the boundary line for the wave of emigration of these sturdy and intelligent people; and it may at once be inferred that with them were brought the Calvinism and Presbyterianism of their former homes.

Up to the time of the organization of our church, the Presbyte-

rians of this locality were connected with the Forks of Brandywine congregation. Every Sabbath might large companies have been seen either on horseback or on foot "going to meeting." Six and even nine miles were then not so great a distance as to serve as an excuse for even the aged or the wearied to remain away from service.

I have been informed that some of the ladies, who formerly walked several miles to church, were accustomed to carry their shoes and stockings until they were within a short distance of the "meeting-house," when they would put them on and wear them until they came to about the same place in returning home, when they would again remove and carry them. This may have been for both comfort and economy.

At quite an early day, a prayer-meeting was commenced in "the log school-house," which formerly stood where Mr. Worrall's tenant-house is now located, about a quarter of a mile from the village, and which was removed by Mr. Amos Griffith, upon whose land it stood; the meeting was continued there until "the stone school-house" was erected, on the site between the present school-building and the Union Burial Ground, when it was conducted in that. Occasionally there was a preaching service held.

In the year 1831, while under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. N. C. Grier, D. D., the Forks of Brandywine Church was visited with a wonderful revival of religion, which continued until the year 1835; the fruit thereof was an addition of three hundred persons to the already large number of communicants. So great was the multitude of worshippers that the church edifice was soon found to be too much contracted, and consequently the question of enlargement was suggested. It was decided, by a meeting of the congregation, that the church should be enlarged. But that was not carried out. The members residing in this vicinity, and who had been sustaining the prayer-meeting, and who had been looking forward to the time when there should be a church of their own faith here, believing that the time had come for them to go forward and work out their cherished plans, suggested and acted for a division of the congregation.

A meeting of the citizens of Waynesburg and its vicinity was called and held in "the stone school-house," January 10th, 1835. Jacob McConnell was elected chairman, and Robert Morton was appointed Secretary. At that meeting, the following resolutions were adopted:

"Resolved, That a suitable building be erected in the village of Waynesburg, to accommodate the Presbyterian denomination of Christians in and around said village.

"Resolved, That seven Trustees be appointed by this meeting to superintend said building, and perform such other duties as may be incumbent upon them."

Joseph Marple, Abner Griffith, David Buchanan, William White, Robert Morton, Jacob McConnell, and Amos Griffith were appointed said Trustees. Of these Amos Griffith alone is yet living.

"The said Trustees purchased of George Bailey a lot of land [in the hollow in the rear of our present school-building—W. W. T.], containing one and a half acre for the purpose of erecting thereon a Presbyterian meeting-house for the sum of \$150, and then called a meeting to be held on the 23d day of January, for the purpose of putting said building under contract."

On the day appointed, the contract for a building 55 feet long by 45 feet wide was awarded William Buchanan, he being the lowest bidder, he agreed to put up the building and finish it, "with the exception of the basement-story inside"—and to find all the material, except the stone, which the Trustees agreed to deliver on the ground, for the sum of \$1,660. Abner Griffith, William White, and Robert Morton were appointed a building committee.

The necessary steps were then taken to be organized as a church by Presbytery. The Presbyterial record of the organization is as follows :

"At the New Castle Presbytery held in White Clay Creek Church September 29th, 1835,

"A petition for the organization of a Presbyterian Church in Waynesburg, was presented by Mr. Grier, signed by a number of the members of the Church of the Forks of Brandywine, whereupon it was

"Resolved, That their request be granted, and Presbytery appointed Messrs Grier, Wallace and Douglass a committee to organize said Church on the 29th day of November next, and to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and to make out supplies for it."

On Saturday, the 28th of November, 1835, at 11 o'clock, A. M., Rev'ds Grier and Wallace met the applicants and organized the church. There were present with certificates of membership twenty-seven persons,—David Buchanan, Robert Morton, Andrew Stanley, Joseph Marple, Samuel Lawrence, Daniel Spiese, Rebecca Griffith,

Eliza Buchanan, Elizabeth Griffith, Elizabeth Graham, Mary Ann Griffith, Ann Curry, Jane Buchanan, Hannah Buchanan, Eliza Curry, Nancy Morton, Mary H. Morton, Rebecca Lawrence, Mary Ann Stanley, Ann Ottenkirk, Mary White, Margaret Bailey, Margaret Sloan, Mary Ann Bunn, Elizabeth Corbett and Mary Jane Spiese. Of these there are yet living, Samuel Lawrence and his wife Rebecca, Mary Ann Griffith, (Mrs. Wm. Robinson of Rockville) and Jane Buchanan, (Mrs. Wm. Morton.)

After a sermon by Rev. John Wallace, the communicants present proceeded to choose by ballot two persons to serve as ruling elders. David Buchanan and Robert Morton were unanimously elected. The same day Robert Morton was ordained. David Buchanan having been a ruling elder in the Forks of Brandywine Church, ordination in his case was not necessary.

On the afternoon of Sunday, the 29th of November, 1835, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was for the first time administered to the church. Rev'ds Grier and Wallace being present and officiating.

Different members of Presbytery supplied the pulpit. On Sabbath, January 17th, 1836, by invitation of the session, Mr. W. W. Latta preached. Rev. James Latta, his uncle, pastor of the Upper Octorara Church, by Presbyterial appointment, was to have supplied the pulpit that day, but in a note, which has been shown me, and which was written by him January 16th, 1836, he mentions that on account of illness he must be excused, and recommends, as his substitute, Mr. W. W. Latta, whom, he says, the Session might secure for a Sabbath or two, if they pleased. He occupied the pulpit seyeral Sabbaths after this in February and in March.

On Saturday, March 19th, 1836, the congregation met to provide for preaching when the following paper was adopted:

"That this congregation unite with the Grove congregation, in Lancaster County, to be under the care of the same pastor, provided they agree to unite, and that two persons be appointed a committee to effect the object." Elders David Buchanan and Robert Morton were appointed the committee.

I do not find any record of further action in reference to this union, which fortunately was never consummated.

The congregation being disappointed on the last Sabbath in March and the second Sabbath in April, by the failure of supplies to meet

their engagements, Elder David Buchanan conducted the religious exercises and read a sermon.

Presbytery continued to furnish supplies until the first Sabbath in May, when, by invitation, Mr. W. W. Latta again preached. On the following day, May 9th, 1836, the Trustees entered into a written agreement with Mr. Latta to supply the pulpit every Sabbath for one year, to commence the first Sabbath in June, for which service he was to receive "three hundred dollars in two installments of \$150 each, the first to be paid at the end of six months, and the other at the end of the year."

On Saturday, the 21st of May, 1836, the Session convened and received two persons by examination, these being the first so received into this church. I give their names, Joseph Duncan and Mrs. Sarah Bunn.

On Sabbath, August 14th, 1836, Margaret Jane, daughter of Samuel and Rebecca Lawrence, was baptized by Rev. William Latta (the father of Mr. W. W. Latta, and long the honored pastor of the Great Valley Church). This was the first baptism since the organization of the church.

On Wednesday March 8th, 1837, the rents of the pews were increased. The following is the record:

"It was agreed that six seats on each side of the middle aisle in front shall be twelve dollars each, and six on each side of the meeting-house in front, eleven dollars each, and every pew afterwards to fall in price one dollar, bringing the back pews as low as five dollars each. The four corner pews, two in front, five dollars and twenty-five cents each, and the two back, five dollars each."

On the same day, after a sermon by Rev. Joseph Barr, the congregation met and made out a unanimous call for Mr. W. W. Latta, promising an annual salary of \$450.

On the 9th day of May, 1837, the Presbytery of New Castle convened in Waynesburg and ordained and installed Mr. Latta.

On Saturday, October 14th, 1837, the Session received, among others, Captain John Buchanan ruling elder of Forks of Brandywine. On the same day he was unanimously chosen by the congregation, and was installed a ruling elder of this church.

The first marriage notice recorded after Mr. Latta's installation, is that of "William Morton and Jane Buchanan, both of Honeybrook," on February 1st, 1838. They deserved praise for disregarding the absurd idea, cherished by many then, and some even now,

that it is always unfortunate with the couple which chances to be the first married by the officiating minister.

The first death of a member of the church occurred on the 25th of March, 1838, when Miss Mary Ann Stanley, aged 30 years, was summoned away. She bequeathed some money to the church, I have never learned the amount. She certainly did it in a way that is to be commended, gave it to be used at once, and not to linger as a shelter for the parsimonious, who are at any time quick to discover a place of refuge, when their assistance is solicited.

During the session of the Legislature of Pennsylvania of 1839-40, an Act was passed incorporating this Chnrch. The Charter reads thus:

AN ACT

To incorporate the Honeybrook Presbyterian Church in the village of Waynesburg, Chester Co., and for other purposes.

Sec. 1st.—Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that the members of the Honeybrook Presbyterian Church, in the village of Waynesburg, be and the same are hereby created and erected into a body politic and corporate, in deed and in law, by the name, style and title of the “Honeybrook Presbyterian Church, in the village of Waynesburg in Chester County,” and by the same name shall have perpetual succession, and be able to sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded and shall be able and capable to take and hold lands and tene-ments, goods and chattels, real, personal and mixed, which are now, or may hereafter become the property of said congregation, or body corporate, by gift, grant, devise, bequest, or otherwise, and the same to convey, lay out, apply or dispose of in such manner as a majority of the trustees of said congregation shall direct and appoint, and according to the true intents of the donors, grantors and devisors; provided that the yearly value or income of said estate shall not, at any time, exceed the sum of two thousand dollars, exclusive of annual stated contributions.

Sec. 2d.—That Joseph Marple, Abner Griffith, William White, David Buchanan, Robert Morton, Jacob McConnell and Amos Griffith, be trustees, to continue in office for one year, and until others be chosen, in such manner, time and place as shall be determined by a majority of the members of the said church.

Sec. 3d.—That the said trustees shall choose by ballot from among their number a President and Secretary, and shall also choose a Treasurer, who shall be a member of the congregation, and who shall, if required by the trustees, give security for the faithful performance of the trust reposed in him, and to account to them for all sums of money received by him ; and in the case of the removal of the President or of any other officer or member of the board of trustees, by death, or resignation, or by neglecting to attend the meetings of said board twice in succession without a good cause, or otherwise, the vacancy or vacancies shall be supplied by said board until the next annual election.

Sec. 4th.—That the trustees, and their successors, shall have power to make and use one common seal, and the same to alter and renew at pleasure; to enact and enforce such By-Laws and ordinances as may be proper and necessary for the regulation and transaction of the business of the corporation; to change the time for holding the annual election of trustees from time to time as they may find convenient; or if the congregation fail to elect on the day of the annual meeting, to appoint any subsequent time on which said election shall be held; provided that notice thereof be given from the pulpit, or in such other manner as a majority of the trustees may direct, at least two weeks before said election, and provided also that said By-Laws and ordinances shall not be inconsistent with the Constitution or Laws of this State, or of the United States.

W.M. HOPKINS, *Speaker, H. R.*

EBENEZER KINGSBURY, *Speaker S.*

Approved April 16th, 1840. DAVID R. PORTER, *Governor.*

In the year 1843, the church was blessed with quite a revival of religion, during the progress of which the pastor was aided by Rev'ds Wm. Latta, James Latta, Alfred Hamilton, R. P. Du Bois, Alfred Nevin, J. N. C. Grier, and others, and at the Fall communion, forty-four were received by examination.

On the 2d of November, 1844, the trustees met, when a communication was received from Mr. Latta in which he asked an increase of fifty dollars to his salary, among other things, he said, as the clerk has recorded:—"If the trustees will secure to him a salary of \$475.00 a year and see that it is regularly and punctually paid from year to year he will rest satisfied until the full amount, \$500, can be collected from the pew rents, otherwise the trustees may consider

the pulpit vacant from and after the next meeting of Presbytery: * he further says, that he desires the trustees to do nothing whatever simply out of regard to himself personally, but to act according to what they think best for the interests of the congregation, as he has no fears that he shall be unable to soon secure another field." The trustees agreed to raise the salary for that year to \$475, but voted to refer the communication to the congregation at some future time. I fear that, like many other papers set aside for future consideration, this was never again brought to the surface, as I have not been able to find any trace of it after this date.

The church edifice in which the congregation worshipped being poorly located and out of repair, on the 27th of September, 1850, a majority of the trustees and members of the congregation assembled and unanimously determined to erect a new edifice on new ground, and for that purpose then and there subscribed \$1,350. On the 25th of November of the same year, the subscriptions having increased to \$3,100, it was agreed to proceed with the preparatory work for building. Messrs Henry Long, Wm. P. Buchanan and Robert Morton were appointed a building committee, and Rev. W. W. Latta, and Messrs Amos Griffith, John G. Buchanan and Robert Morton were appointed a committee to visit other edifices to determine upon the style of architecture.

Contracts were made as follows, with Mr. George Beam to do the carpenter work at \$1.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ a day, John Gest to do the mason work at 54 cents per perch, Murray & Jamison to do the plastering at \$1.30 a day, or by the square yard, at the customary price, Isaac Griffith to do the painting at \$1.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ a day.

The new site was donated by Rev. W. W. Latta, and Mr. Abner Griffith.

The old edifice having been at once demolished, the congregation was kindly tendered the use of their edifice, for Sabbath afternoons, by the trustees of the M. E. Church, and the offer was gratefully accepted.

The cost of the new house was over \$6,000 in cash, while the stone, lumber and lime, were delivered free. It was dedicated in the Spring of 1852, Rev. Henry Boardman, D. D., preached in the morning, from the words, "Thy way, O Lord, is in the sanctuary." Rev. Lewis Cheeseman, D.D., preached afternoon and evening.

* Such a course now is not considered orderly.

The dimensions of the building are on the outside, fifty-five by seventy feet; the audience room exclusive of the gallery, is sixty by fifty-one feet. The number of pews on the ground floor *was* 104. The gallery is thirteen feet wide across the one end of the building, and will accommodate at least one hundred persons.

Too much in the way of praise cannot be said of the good judgment and excellent taste displayed in connection with every portion of the edifice, by the committees and those whom they had in their employ. In every respect they wrought fully as much for the future as for the present.

In the new church the highest pew rent was \$12, the lowest about \$2.50.

In April, 1852, the congregation elected to the office of ruling elder, John G. Buchanan, Hugh R. Buchanan and William E. Lewis. Mr. H. R. Buchanan having been an elder in the Pequea Church, and Mr. Lewis having served as such in the West Nantmeal Church, they were simply installed, while Mr. J. G. Buchanan was both ordained and installed.

January 8th, 1855. At a meeting of the trustees and elders it was unanimously agreed, "owing to the rise of the necessities of life," to raise the pastor's salary to \$600.

In the year 1857 when the flood tide of revival was rolling over our land this community with others was blessed. At the Fall communion twenty-seven persons were received on profession of faith.

The year following witnessed the painful separation of the pastor from his first, and, as since proved, his only flock, and the flock from its first pastor. He had been a loving and faithful ambassador for Christ. He had joyed with his people when they were in joy, and had wept with them when they were in tears. They in turn had unitedly stood by him, and had cherished for him the highest affection. How could their removal from each other be otherwise than painful? Mr. Latta's ministry in this place was a decided success: without any pomp or show, quietly, it may at times have seemed slowly, he was enabled to lead his people onward. He saw them develope from a handful into quite a host, he was privileged to see them advance from one of the lowest to one of the highest positions in the way of benevolence. During his pastorate of more than twenty years, there were received into the church by examination two hundred and twenty-one, by certificate eighty-four.

Mr. Latta is still living, as a ministerial brother has remarked "he

is spared to be to us an example of Christ-likeness." He is a member of the Philadelphia Presbytery. His name appears in the General Assembly minutes with the title of "teacher." May he long be permitted to abide on earth to teach those who come under his influence how to develope in both mind and heart.

In his farewell discourse Mr. Latta said, "I step aside, and yield my place unto some other public servant of the Master, may he be a man of faith and prayer." That wish was well answered.

On the 20th of December, 1858, at a congregational meeting moderated by Rev. Robert Gamble, Mr. John G. Thom was unanimously called to fill the vacant pulpit, on a salary of \$700, which was subsequently increased. Mr. Thom was the recipient of several calls, but to his mind "the indications of providence pointed clearly to Waynesburg." He accepted the call, and on the 19th of May, 1859, was ordained and installed by the Donegal Presbytery.

He at once with intense earnestness entered upon his work. Not satisfied with simply laboring in the meetings in the church, he established weekly meetings in outlying districts, attending them alternately. There being then no preaching in the church on Sabbath evening, he quite regularly held service Sabbath afternoons at the several points to which we have referred. For a period he taught a Bible class which met previous to the Sabbath morning service, and which became quite popular.

During the first months of his pastorate there was a special awakening in the church, and at the following communion thirty-four persons were received by examination.

In 1859, a parsonage was purchased at a cost of over \$2,000.

April 28th, 1861, Wm. P. Buchanan, John W. Morton and B. Franklin Supplee, were ordained and installed ruling elders.

In 1862, when the country was marred with bitter strife, Mr. Thom was drafted for military service, not willing to allow his congregation to purchase his release, nor to accept of a substitute, he determined to report for duty. The day previous to the time appointed for his departure was Communion Sabbath. At the close of the service on that day, he told the congregation that "no man had more to live for than he, and yet he thought no man was more willing to lay down his life for his country, when God called for the sacrifice." He went to the rendezvous but was released from duty and permitted to return home.

Several months after this, one of the young men of the congregation, (N. J. K. Lewis) then connected with the army, having died in a hospital in Virginia, and there being difficulty experienced in trying to secure his remains Mr. Thom volunteered to go and use his influence. By persevering efforts he succeeded in his mission, but while doing this he was not content without acting fully in accordance with his higher commission and so, we are told, while with the army he engaged in a variety of service to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of the soldiers.

In 1863, when Pennsylvania was invaded by the Southern army under Gen. Robert E. Lee, one day a telegram was received in Waynesburg, announcing the destruction of the bridge at Columbia, in order to check the progress of the enemy then gathered on the opposite side of the river. That night the church bell was rung, and the citizens of Waynesburg and vicinity were collected to consider their duty of the hour. Mr. Thom made an address eloquently appealing to all to be willing to go forth to aid in driving back the foe, pledging himself to go with any who would offer themselves for military service. It is said that it was chiefly through his influence that a full company was enlisted. Mr. A. T. Buchanan (a member of the congregation; son of elder David Buchanan, and now an M. D., located in Cambridge City, Ind.,) was elected captain of the company, while Mr. Thom entered the ranks as a private. The company went to Lancaster and thence to Harrisburg.

Previous to the organization of the regiment there sprang up a spirit of defection among those from Waynesburg, some were anxious to return home, others complained of the government requirements, and a strong majority were seriously thinking of refusing to take the usual oath of fidelity. This caused much solicitude on the part of Mr. Thom, he determined to prevent any disgraceful conduct, and availing himself of the opportunity after the first morning roll call, he made what has been termed "a very eloquent and soul stirring address," which he concluded with the declaration "as for myself I would rather die like a dog, than live a coward." It proved to be the needed remedy. Complaints were silenced, and every man retained his place. On the organization of the regiment, the 47th P. V. M., Mr. Thom was appointed chaplain. The regiment marched from Harrisburg to the Potomac, just in time to see the confederate army recross. It was then ordered to Schuylkill County in this State, to assist in quieting the miners, and after a brief term

of service there, it was mustered out at Reading. As chaplain, Mr. Thom was a favorite among the soldiers.

After his return from this service with his usual zeal Mr. Thom resumed his work. His health was impaired but he nevertheless engaged in labors abundant. During his pastorate he had declined several calls to other fields, among them one from Columbia, and another from Carlisle, Pa. In May, 1865, he was invited to visit the Pine St. Church, in St. Louis, he went in July, preached three Sabbaths, and the result was he received a call to the pastorate of that church. After due deliberation, he decided to go to that field. His last sermons, in Waynesburg, were very impressive. Several weeks previous to his departure, typhoid fever was present in the community, scarcely a home escaping its inroad. Among the sick and the dying he moved to say, what was to many a sad word, "farewell." His last sermon was preached with an open coffin before the pulpit. Leaving behind him the people for whom he had the warmest affection, and for whom he had expended his best powers; leaving behind him the home which was to be the last that he and his fond wife and much-loved boys should be permitted to enjoy together, he hastened to his new charge.

On the first Sabbath in October, 1865, he commenced his labors; on Tuesday, November 28th, 1865, he was surrounded by loved ones, when it was whispered "He is dead." A short illness, the seeds of which were undoubtedly received while yet in Waynesburg, had closed his beautiful and useful life. He was removed in the 36th year of his age. So young to be so much blessed!

During Mr. Thom's pastorate in Waynesburg, there were received into the church by examination seventy, by certificate eighteen. But these are not the sole fruits of his sowing in this direction; even to-day, with all the changes that have occurred, may it be said, "Though dead, he yet speaketh." His name is a household word. Those who listened to his sermons, or received his visits, speak with a peculiar delight thereof, while the children, and others, like myself, who never saw him, gaze upon his picture, which adorns so many homes, and listen to the descriptions of his sterling qualities which fall from so many lips, and are filled with admiration for the man of God. We may all wonder and question concerning his early call home, but we remember the words—

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain,
God is his own interpreter
And he will make it plain."

Early in 1866, Rev. J. H. Young was called to the pastorate of the church on a salary of \$1000; he accepted, and was installed at some period during the same year, the time is not noted in the Sessional records.

On the 5th of April, 1868, Jacob Dampman, Thomas Gault, Rudolph Feister and Peter Supplee were elected to serve as ruling elders, the last named declined to accept the office, the others were ordained and installed April 11th, the service being conducted by Rev. J. N. C. Grier, D. D., assisted by Rev's. Thos. Long and J. H. Young.

In 1869, the trustees disposed of the parsonage property for \$5000. From the very beginning, there was a minority of the congregation opposed to Mr. Young's pastorate, which instead of decreasing, rather, through various causes, increased. At length the opposition developed to such a degree of intensity that it gave rise to a request that he resign, this was counterbalanced by a request from his friends that he remain.

February 7th, 1869, Mr. Young presented his resignation to the session, which was afterwards presented to the people, who voted for a dissolution of the pastoral relationship. On March 7th, at a *pro re nata* meeting of Presbytery, the request of pastor and congregation was granted.

During Mr. Young's pastorate there were added to the church, fourteen on profession of faith and twenty-four by letters of dismission.

Mr. Young was an excellent student, and a far more than ordinary sermonizer; he was thoroughly evangelical. He was proverbial for his readiness of speech, quick wittedness, promptness at retort and keen satire. He was certainly to be feared in a wordy warfare. After his dismission from Waynesburg he took no church, but located and engaged in business at Indiana in this State: he is at present a member of the Presbytery of Kittanning, and is Professor of Latin and German in the Normal School in Indiana.

On the 19th of June, 1869, a call was extended to the Rev. Chas. T. McMullin, but he declined to accept.

On the first of August following, a unanimous call, promising a salary of \$1,000, was made out for Rev. Wm. A. Ferguson, of Dubuque, Ia., he accepted the call and at once commenced to serve the church.

On the 16th of the same month, the Trustees purchased from Mr.

John Myers a piece of ground for \$600, and immediately proceeded to erect thereon the present commodious parsonage and a stable, at a cost of \$3,400.

October 29th, Mr. Fergusson was installed by the Presbytery of Donegal. The same Fall, a protracted meeting was held, when there were thirty-nine persons received into the church on profession of faith.

In 1870, the basement of the church was refitted, and new heaters were erected.

In the Fall of 1870, there was an ingathering into the church of twenty-two, by examination.

In the Fall of 1871, for reasons not necessary to be detailed here, Mr. Fergusson requested the congregation to unite with him in asking Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship; the congregation acquiesced; and at a meeting of the Presbytery of Chester, held in Waynesburg, October 3d, 1871, the relationship was dissolved.

During Mr. Fergusson's pastorate there were received into the church, by examination sixty-six, by certificate twenty. Mr. Fergusson is usually spoken of as being quite a good preacher. He is at present settled over the Pittsgrove Church, in New Jersey, to which he was called in 1871, and where his labors have been much blessed.

The 10th of June, 1872, your present pastor was given a unanimous call, promising a salary of \$1,200, and a parsonage. On the 15th of the same month, he began his labors as pastor elect, and on the 31st of October he was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Chester. Sermon by Rev. James Roberts, charge to pastor by Rev. W. M. Rice, D. D., charge to people by Rev. B. B. Hotchkin, D. D.

In the Summer of 1872, an auxiliary to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized, with Mrs. Victoria Morton (now deceased) as President, and Miss Mattie A. Buchanan, as Secretary. The same lady is still Secretary, while Mrs. W. P. Buchanan is President.

In the Fall of 1874, the audience room and the vestibules of the church were remodeled and handsomely finished. A recess pulpit was made, new walnut rails and ash balusters were placed in front of the different blocks of pews, along the front of the gallery and on the stair cases; new pews were put in, increasing the number to

112; the old pews were altered, the doors being removed and the ends being remodeled, and all were neatly upholstered; the walls and ceilings were artistically frescoed, and all the wood work was painted or oiled; the floor was carpeted, the vestibules and stair cases were covered with cocoa matting; new lamp fixtures and a large chandelier, pulpit chairs, a communion table and a pulpit were provided, and at the same time the parsonage was re-painted, all at a cost of about \$4,100. To-day, as another, while describing the edifice, well said, "The Waynesburg Church is one of the most commodious, and elegantly furnished churches in the country."

The committee on repairs consisted of the Pastor and Messrs J. C. Buchanan and Stephen H. Long. The contractors were for building, Mr. Frank Criley, for painting, Mr. John Patterson. Let me say, just here, that Messrs Buchanan and Long deserve great credit both for the taste displayed, and for the economical manner in which they succeeded in doing so much and so well.

The church was re-opened November, 1874, with a sermon in the morning by Rev. James M. Crowell, D.D., and one in the evening by the pastor.

With the re-opening the "Presbyterian Hymnal" was introduced into the congregation.

December 27th, 1874, the session decided to have the communion service quarterly instead of semi-annually, as had been the custom.

In the Spring of 1875, our church was honored in having one of its ruling elders, W. P. Buchanan, sent by Presbytery as a delegate to the General Assembly.

In the Fall of 1875, the pastor, not having taken his vacation as usual in the Summer, by invitation, gave six weeks to the interests of Lincoln University, by visiting churches and individuals and making known its grand object and needs. During this period, the pulpit was supplied by the able Professors of that institution.

During the months of February and March of this year, it pleased the Great Head of the Church to grant us a time of refreshing, so that at the Spring communion there were received into the church forty-four persons by examination; precisely the same as the highest number ever before received in like manner at one time, which was in 1843, when Mr. Latta was pastor.

In the Spring of this year, the Trustees decided to increase the pew-rents, to meet both the ordinary expenses and an indebtedness of about \$1,500; the highest rent was fixed at \$27.

During the four years of my pastorate, there have been added to the church, by examination, fifty-eight, by letter, nine. I have preached and lectured seven hundred and nine times, married fifteen couples, baptized forty-two persons, ranging from the infant to the adult, attended seventy-five funerals; (for such as take an interest in such statistics, I would remark that twenty-eight were of persons over seventy years of age, and thirteen of persons over fifty years of age;) and I have averaged each of the four years four hundred pastoral visits and calls—this excludes all of merely a social character; and let it be borne in mind, when these statistics are considered, that our congregation is not grouped into a small space, but that it is spread out over at least twelve square miles of territory.

I believe that, through all the history of the church, there has been a Sabbath school connected with it, open either during the Summer or all the year. At present, the school continues its sessions the year through. There are about one hundred and seventy-five scholars, distributed in fifteen classes, and an infant department. Everything is under the supervision of a S. S. Association, consisting of the officers and teachers of the school, and a committee of the elders, and which in turn is responsible to the Session. At present the pastor is superintendent, with Mr. Jesse I. Dauman as assistant.

The church, during Mr. Latta's pastorate, advanced to the position of one of the first in the country, at no time has it receded from this position; the present number of communicants is two hundred and seventy-five.

Among those who have been connected with the church, there have been some of the wisest and best that ever lived in this community. Of course I cannot refer to them all individually, I cannot however forbear mentioning those who served in the Session, and who are now in visible relation with the church above.

The first ruling elder whose death the church was called to mourn was Robert Morton, who died April 11th, 1852, aged 73 years.

He was a man with strong attachments to the church. A man well known not so much for words as for acts. When in company he was very quick to invite non church goers to come to service, if they objected, saying they could not pay for sittings, he usually replied "Come, and if you cannot, I will pay." In this manner he succeeded in inducing many to attend, but it is said that in no instance was it necessary for him to pay. He was a very positive man, as one of his neighbors has expressed it, "A man who seldom set his

mind and heart upon a thing without accomplishing it." He and elder David Buchanan were the first to propose the second church built in 1851-2. As we have seen, he was a member of the committee on building and the committee on plan, the fact is that from the time of the first meeting called to take steps to secure a church in this community, as long as he lived, not a committee was formed but what he was appointed on it. So much attention did he give to the enterprise, when the second edifice was being reared, that daily could his well known horse be seen on the road going either to or from Waynesburg. This animal became so accustomed to going to the church, that he would leave home and without line would go and stand at his particular post. It was through Mr. Morton's persistent efforts that the spire, clock and bell which now crown this edifice were secured. But before the church was fully completed, his life work was done, God called, and he was not, and for his funeral the bell, which he so much desired and secured, was first tolled.

The next summoned away was elder, or, as he is frequently mentioned in the records, Captain John Buchanan, aged 83 years. He had been a captain of a Light Horse company in 1812. He had been an elder in the Forks of Brandywine Church from 1815, and was the father of four sons all of whom were elected to the office, and served as ruling elders. David, John G., William P. and Andrew, the last named serving only in the Forks of Brandywine congregation. At first, Captain Buchanan, being a very warm friend of Rev. Dr. Grier, his pastor, was not inclined to withdraw from the old mother church, and continued to drive the six miles to attend service, while his children and neighbors attended the new church. It is said that one Sabbath, as he was as usual driving toward his church, he met his son David, who was coming to Waynesburg, the latter called out, "Well, father, you still prefer to journey to Jerusalem to worship." He soon, however, began to view matters differently, and in 1837 changed his church home, and was elected to serve as an elder in the new congregation. He was a man of strong character, wielding a great influence in community.

On the 3d of June, 1859, elder John G. Buchanan, aged 46 years, was taken away. From what I can learn, I infer that he was one of that class of men who are bright and shining lights, wherever they may be placed. I take the following passages, which have reference to him, from the Memoir of Mr. Thom. "Mr. B. was a

good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith. His life had exhibited the power of Divine grace and the beauties of holiness so clearly, that none who knew him questioned his meetness for heaven." "One day the light of heaven resting on his brow, he said to his pastor, as he entered the death chamber, 'Have you come to rejoice with me, because I have found him whom my soul loveth ?' And when asked, by his brother, whether Jesus continued precious to his soul, he responded, 'O yes, he is ever precious, and now he stands just ready to present me faultless before his Father's throne.'" Thus passed away this man of God.

The 5th of April, 1861, elder William Lewis, aged 64 years, was called to his rest. He had, previous to his connection with the Waynesburg church, been a ruling elder in the West Nantmeal Church. He was a modest, unassuming man, full of faith and devoted to the interests of the Master's kingdom. He was remarkable for his humble willingness to fill any post that was assigned to him. He was such a man as a pastor or people always know where to find.

The next to follow was elder Hugh R. Buchanan, aged 57 years, who passed away March 6th, 1862. He had come, ten years previously, from the Pequea Church, where he had been a member of the Session. He was a man who was ever as true to all his moral and religious duties, as a needle is true to the pole. Distance, inclement weather, were not in his opinion sufficient excuse for neglect in attendance upon the services of God's house. When in health his presence and help could always be relied upon, if, for any reason, he could not ride, he would walk miles to reach church. Almost the last public work which he did was to make a series of religious visits in a portion of the congregation, and it was the testimony of his pastor who followed him, that a deep seriousness resulted from his visitation. Some to whom he addressed solemn and tender words were thereby led to find peace by believing in Jesus.

The last to whom we make reference, but a short time since fell asleep, we have not yet ceased to miss his form. David Buchanan aged 76 years, departed this life February 20th, 1875.

While a member of the Forks of Brandywine Church, and when but twenty-six years of age he was called to serve as a ruling elder in that very large congregation. There he remained and rendered acceptable service until the organization of this church, when he was chosen to serve in it. He was really a remarkable man. His very

presence seemed at once to secure him respect and influence. He was just such an one as we would naturally suppose people would select for their leader. He was ever active in caring for both the spiritual and temporal wants of the congregation. He had not a spark of sympathy for any who shrank from employing their talents or means for the cause of Christ. The congregation was unusually fortunate in having in its early history such a pair of men as he and elder Robert Morton to take position in the vanguard. I will quote from the sessional records, concerning Mr. Buchanan. "Than he none were ever more faithful in the discharge of duty, especially are we called upon to testify to his anxious conscientiousness and wisdom in counsel and his liberal support rendered to the temporalities of our church. We shall long miss his wise, upright, and eminently Christian example."

God be praised for these and other examples which it has been the privilege of this church to enjoy, may it be the desire of all to emulate their virtues.

Among those who have occasionally supplied the pulpit of this church we find the names of the following: John Dickey, D.D., W. R. Bingham, R. P. DuBois, Alfred Nevin, D.D., L.L.D., Henry Boardman, D.D., W. Plummer, D.D., L.L.D., Rev. Dr. Happer, I. N. Rendall, D.D., Prof. E. R. Bower, W. M. Rice, D.D., Alexander Reed, D.D., James M. Crowell, D.D. and C. R. Gregory, D.D.

Just here I wish to briefly notice those who have occupied the position which is one of the most difficult to serve. I allude to that of sexton. The first employed was Saml. Brown, who resided in the basement of the church; during his term of service it was customary to have a box hanging in the church to receive missionary offerings; the offerings not accumulating as fast as it was believed they should, certain measures were taken to ascertain whether there was not some tampering with the box when it was discovered that the sexton was in the habit of "shaking the box" and relieving it of some of its treasure; for this offence he was dismissed. Then the office was filled by Mr. W. Goodman, who was succeeded by Mr. Eli S. Kulp, and who in turn was succeeded by Mr. John Sloan. In 1852, Mr. J. Hughes was employed for one year for which he was to receive "\$36, and no extras." He was a most excellent man for the position, and retained it, of course, with increased salary, until advanced age and failing eye-sight compelled him to resign in April, 1875. Such a habit had his coming to the church and caring

for its security become that even after another had been secured to take his old place, he would, with his staff, feel his way down through the darkness of the night, and enter the basement and go to the heaters to ascertain whether everything was safe. Though a member of the M. E. Church he still finds his way to our sanctuary, and to our prayer meetings, where he gives us welcome assistance in his earnest prayers. His successor is Mr. Ezra Coates.

As much as we have now considered pertains to home-life, but the church has a history connected with outside life. It has not been doing but one kind of service, it has not been developing its resources for simply this immediate locality; instead it has ever been ready and quick to respond to all cries for help from abroad, with either consecrated men, women or money.

When first organized and aid from the Board was hoped for to assist in the struggle to gain a foothold, opposition was met with from such as should have been earnest friends, the plea was, that the church could never sustain itself; this, however, as in other instances, only served as an incentive to make the little band sacrifice the more, and the consequence was that in a short time the church became known for its prosperity at home and its contributions for away. In benevolent contributions it now surpasses all other churches in the Presbytery. I am not able to give the figures for the period previous to 1866, but in that year, for outside work, the amount contributed was \$530. Since then it has been, 1867, \$615, 1868, \$586, 1869, \$657, 1870, \$661, 1871, \$782, 1872, \$831, 1873, \$1108, 1874, \$1289, 1875, \$1443. Total of contributions for ten years, for outside benevolent work, \$8502.

In the highest sense this has always been a mission church, at least two-thirds of the foregoing contributions went to sustain foreign and domestic mission work. But as we have intimated, not only money but children of the church have been given. In this the church has a roll worthy of being held up to view.

Early in the church's history, the Rev. G. W. Simpson, the son of Christian parents, gave himself to mission work, and was stationed at the Gaboon Mission, on the west coast of Africa. He was a promising young man, well educated, thoroughly in earnest and devoted to missions; but it was not his privilege to live and show what with the help of God he could do. Only a short time after his arrival at his field, while out in a boat which was caught in a gale and capsized, he and his wife were drowned. When the news

of his death was communicated to his aged mother, she calmly remarked, "Well, he will be nearer to me in Heaven, than he was in Africa."

August 1st, 1860, Miss Mary Latta, afterward Mrs. Nassau, sailed from New York for Corisco. According to her own note book, Nov. 1st, according to our Sessional record, Nov. 31st, 1857, she was received into the church by examination. She was the niece of Rev. W. W. Latta. She was of a very lively disposition, just such an one as was calculated to make bright some dark spot of earth, and, as if she knew that, she, with a heart enlisted for mission work, gave herself for Africa. It was not in a moment of unusual enthusiasm that she decided upon her course; enthusiasm for missions seems to have been always a characteristic of hers; in a letter written in 1856, to her guardian, Mr. David Buchanan, which has been handed me, she inquires whether she may not make use of some of her income to assist the work of missions, either by giving through the Board, or by assisting in educating some missionary's child. For the sequel to her departure, I will quote what appeared in "The Presbyterian."

"Died, Sept. 10th, 1870, Mrs. Mary C. Nassau, wife of Rev. R. H. Nassau, M. D., of Corisco Mission, West Africa. With this mission she had been connected for ten years, during which time she once visited America. For her chosen work she was admirably adapted both by nature and by grace. Always calm in danger, patient in tribulation, generous in giving, correct in judgment, full of faith, abounding in good works. How much the sable converts from heathen darkness and superstition felt her loss, was seen as they surrounded her corpse and 'wept for themselves.' Last Spring her failing health led her husband to arrange for her return by an opportunity offering in July. But when the time arrived, feeling better, she declined to leave, and it was concluded to wait for expected reinforcements to the mission. But, August 31st, she was attacked with the chill by which the African fever is preceded. The medical means employed broke the disease and it was hoped that with a change of climate she would recover. Dr. Nassau set sail with her for England, but on the following day unfavorable symptoms supervened, her exhausted frame sank as in peaceful slumber, and her spirit rose to Jesus from the Atlantic wave to receive a martyr's crown. Her precious remains were interred at Benita, in the ground which, three years before, was first consecrated as a cemetery by the

burial of her beloved child." To learn of this noble woman, to be much benefited, I advise as many as can to secure her always interesting memoir, "Crowned in Palm Land," published by Lippincott, 1874.

October, 1867, Rev. Elwood M. Wherry and wife, the daughter of elder W. P. Buchanan, both members of this church, sailed for India. They were stationed at Lodiana, where Mr. Wherry now has charge of the mission press. Faithfully and successfully have they been sowing the precious seed truths which, watered by the Holy Spirit, are to take root, grow up, and bring forth fruit in the salvation of souls long shut up in heathen darkness. From the lips of a native convert, Narayan Sheshadri, and from the lips of some of our own missionaries have I heard words of praise concerning the manner in which they are making known to men, women and children the glad tidings of salvation.

Engaged in ministerial work in this land, the church has Rev. W. P. White; he was called, ordained and installed over the church at Plymouth, Pa., about 1870, where he is still with a living and exceedingly prosperous congregation, which he has built up. His name has immense influence for good all through the Wyoming Valley. The comment which one of his co-presbyters, a man of good judgment, has to make upon him is in the shape of a request, "If you have any more like him, send them along we have places for them."

Mr. John Albert Buchanan, the son of the former elder J. G. Buchanan, having graduated at Lafayette College at the recent commencement, proposes, the approaching Fall, to enter Union Seminary to prepare himself for the gospel ministry. May God give him life and health and enable him to come forth to preach with power from on high the unsearchable riches of Christ to a dying world.

Such now is the result of my effort to trace out the history of this church during forty years and a half, which have passed since its organization. I am aware that the work might have been done better by others, but have we not had sufficient pass in review to teach us some important lessons? The actual influence of the prayers, sermons, conversations and sacrifices of these years we can never know in time—it will only be manifest when we see no longer through a glass darkly. But let us give ear and learn what is to be learned. "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."

Will we not endeavor to profit from the experiences and efforts of the past? May God's choicest blessings ever rest upon this congregation. May it ever grow stronger, and may its sympathies with all who love God and are toiling for the salvation of men ever increase. May it ever be known for its sacrifices and earnest endeavors for the lifting up of mankind.

Brethren, let us who live to-day do our work and let us do it well. Let us show ourselves worthy of our privileges. May we as pastor and people be faithful unto death, and through the unsearchable riches of Christ "have a right to the tree of life," and at last "enter in through the gates into the city" to be united forever with those whose footprints we have seen in our wanderings in our church's history, and with others who must certainly follow us. "*Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*"

The present officers of the church are as follows:

PASTOR,

W. W. TOTHEROH.

ELDERS.

W. P. BUCHANAN,
JOHN W. MORTON,
JACOB DAMPMAN,
THOMAS GAULT,
RUDOLPH FEISTER.

TRUSTEES.

J. C. BUCHANAN, *Prest.*
STEPHEN H. LONG, *Sec'y.*
JACOB DAMPMAN,
SAMUEL McCONNELL,
R. W. MORTON,
JAMES RALSTON,
ISAIAH WILSON.